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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

August 24, 1960

60-6598

File
Aug
28

Honorable Allen W. Dulles
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Dulles:

I have accepted an invitation from the Soviet Ambassador, Mr. Mikhail A. Menshikov, to lunch with him on Thursday, August 25, 1960. I have communicated this fact to the Acting Secretary of State, and I want also to keep you advised.

If you care to have me do so, I will be glad to make a personal report to you at some convenient time following the luncheon.

Sincerely,


Frank Church
United States Senator

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE)


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ER 60-6728/a

17 SEP 1960

Honorable Frank Church
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Church:

I am returning herewith your most interesting memorandum covering a recent conversation you had with a foreign diplomat.

I greatly appreciate your making this information available to me and have taken the liberty of taking a copy for my files.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

Allen W. Dulles
Director

Enclosure

O/DCI:JSE:mfb

Distribution:

O & 1 - Addressee w/enclosure
1 - DCI via reading w/cy basic
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BY SENATOR FRANK CHURCH (For the File)

RE LUNCHEON WITH AMBASSADOR MENSHIKOV, THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 1960

TO: Honorable Allen W. Dulles
Director of Central Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington 25, D. C.

I met with Ambassador Menshikov at 12:30 P.M., on August 25, 1960, in the parlor of his official residence on the third floor of the Soviet Embassy, 1125 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

The conversation began with an exchange of pleasantries concerning the various languages that were spoken in the Soviet Union. The Ambassador emphasized that as many as eighty different languages were spoken, which took precedence over the Russian language. He said the Russian language was secondary in these provinces, and, by way of illustration, pointed to the Ukraine, where the Ukrainian language is used in all of the schools, and is spoken in preference to Russian by the people.

I asked the Ambassador if reports that I had heard concerning anti-Jewish feeling in the Ukraine were true. He said that there was no anti-Jewish feeling anywhere in the Soviet Union, and that such resentment that might exist toward Jewish people was individual resentment not related to the fact that they were Jewish. He said there had been no anti-Jewish persecutions, and pointed to a number of Jewish people who had won fame in the arts and sciences within the Soviet Union as proof of the fact that the Jews were not discriminated against under the Communist regime.

I thanked the Ambassador for this information, but informed him that I had heard the reports of Jewish persecutions within Russia from Jewish sources in this country, as well as from Jews from Israel. Menshikov replied that this was merely "propaganda."

Our conversation then turned to Africa. Menshikov asked me what I thought about conditions in the Congo. I told him that, in my opinion, there would be much chaos and unrest in central Africa for many years to come. I pointed to the low level of education in the Congo, the critical lack of trained technicians and administrative personnel, and the hostility between tribes, as the ingredients of instability and disorder. Menshikov countered with the argument that the Congolese, as well as all other Africans, would manage to run their affairs well enough, despite these shortcomings, if they were permitted to do so. He objected to the "outside pressures," and charged that these would be responsible for the continuing unrest in Africa.

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE) *Conc*

I told him that I felt the Belgians had undertaken a wide-spread program to educate the Congolese, and to prepare them for independence, but that this program had not had a sufficient time to come to fruition. I said that the elementary public school system had educated large numbers of young Congolese in the fundamentals, but that very few had yet been trained at the high school and college levels. I insisted that the forces of history had overtaken the Congo, bringing independence before the people had been fully prepared for it. Menshikov broke off the conversation by saying that it had never been intended that the Congolese should be prepared for independence, and that the old colonial powers would continue to molest the newly emerging African nations. This intervention, he contended, would be the principal source of African disorder in the years to come.

At this point we left the parlor and entered the dining room for lunch. At the table, our conversation turned to other matters. I opened the conversation by suggesting that although he had seriously condemned Western colonialism in Africa and Asia, this era was ending. I argued that the Western empires had broken up all across the world, with many newly independent nations emerging from the wreckage. I said, however, that the Russian government had established a new empire, the only new empire to be created in the Twentieth Century, and that this empire embraced all of the satellite countries in Eastern Europe. Menshikov hotly denied this. He asked me what I knew about the Eastern European countries. I replied that I spent a week at Warsaw at the Interparliamentary Union last year, and that I had met any number of Polish people in Warsaw who complained that their government was neither independent nor free. I said that my contacts had included members of the Communist regime itself who took pride in the degree that the Gomulka government had moved toward independence of Russia. I pointed out, however, that even these Polish Communists admitted that Gomulka had ventured as far as the Russians would permit, and that they, themselves, did not pretend that their government was a wholly free and independent one. Moreover, I stressed the fact that several of the Communists with whom I had conversed admitted that if free elections were held inside Poland, the Communist regime would be overwhelmingly defeated. These Communists, I said, contended that in time the Polish people would learn to accept the Communist regime as "the wave of the future."

Menshikov showed his displeasure with these remarks. He dismissed them with the argument that even as there were these few dissidents in this country who were opposed to our capitalist system, so there were, doubtlessly, some few dissidents in Poland who opposed the Communist regime there. But he said that the Polish elections proved that the Communist regime in Poland had the overwhelming support of 90 or 95

percent of the Polish people. He specified, with some relish I thought, the way the Poles might protest the Communist regime by striking out Gomulka's name on the ballot and writing in some other name as a protest vote. He said the fact that so few had done this indicated the extent to which the people approved the Communist regime in Poland. I protested that if an election were carried on in this country on the same basis, and the people were given merely the choice of voting for Eisenhower to continue on as President for as long as he might choose, or striking his name from the ballot and writing in some alternative name, each voter acting individually in the voting booth, that we would have the same kind of result, but that it would be meaningless. I said that in the absence of real alternative choices, in the absence of organized opposition parties that presented a different program to that presented by the Communists, there could be no free election, and the results of the Communist elections were meaningless.

Menshikov again repeated the fact that I had been overly impressed with the objections of dissidents, and then turned the conversation to Cuba. He said that it was not true that the Russians were moving into Cuba. He scoffed at the charge that Cuba was becoming a Russian satellite. However, if it were true, he said, it would only be "repayment in kind." He took note of the fact that the United States had established military bases in north Africa, Arabia, Iran, and elsewhere adjacent to the boundaries of the Soviet Union. If we were entitled to do this, he argued, then the Russians ought to be entitled to do likewise in Cuba, even though they had chosen not to do so.

I countered with the argument that our bases had been established in these countries with the full consent of the governments concerned, and only after forceful Communist aggression in Europe and elsewhere required that we establish a common defense against further encroachments. I asked the Ambassador if he thought American troops were stationed in Western Europe as aggressors, or if they were not there at the invitation and request of the Western Europe governments?

Menshikov replied that he felt the American government had persuaded the governments of Western Europe that they needed American troops, and that men like Adenauer, in Western Germany, had, in effect, conspired with us to entrench our troops in Western Europe. But, he said, Russia would be willing to withdraw her troops from Eastern Europe if the United States would withdraw her troops from Western Europe. "What could be more fair than that?" he asked.

I replied that the proposition was manifestly unfair. I said that it was unsound from a military point of view, in that Russian troops withdrawn from Eastern Europe could readily re-invoke the Continent, whereas American troops, once withdrawn from Western Europe to the United States, westward beyond the Atlantic Ocean, could not be returned to Western Europe in sufficient numbers, or in time enough to successfully defend the Continent against such a Russian invasion. Menshikov said this may not be considering the availability of air transportable forces or to supply them this way. I said I felt certain that the Ambassador realized that this was the case.

By now the Ambassador was beginning to evidence signs of impatience. He said, "I hope you will not mind if I argue these points. After all, technically at least, we are on Soviet soil." I acknowledged that this was so, and told him that I appreciated the opportunity to argue these points with the in a friendly way.

He then shifted the discussion to an entirely different plane. He said, in a rather brusque manner, that we were all now living in a different era. "We have surpassed you in power," he said, "and you can't catch up. Still, we are willing to settle our differences without war."

I replied that we did not recognize that we had been surpassed in military power, but we did recognize that the nuclear arsenals maintained both by the Soviet Union and the United States were sufficient to destroy all life on the planet. I said we believed that a thermo-nuclear war would, therefore, be an insanity. I pointed out that the Christian and Moslem civilizations had existed side by side for centuries after the Crusades had ended. I said I felt that it might be possible for the Communist and Capitalist world to "co-exist," using Uncle Sverd's term, providing that war between us might be avoided. Menshikov added, saying, "Let history be the judge of which system will come ultimately to prevail," and I said that we were willing to compete peacefully with the Communist system so that history might render a verdict.

I argued, however, that our chance to do this would depend upon avoiding a nuclear war between us, and this in turn, depended upon settling in and to the arms race. Menshikov agreed that this was the key objective Mr. Khrushchev had in mind when he called his general disarmament plan to the international forums. I replied that the key to any agreement between us was compromise. I said that history was replete with examples of ill-conceived resolutions that were never implemented by the

countries making them, and that we could judge the sincerity of the Soviet Union only by its willingness to submit to reasonable inspection systems that would insure us that the Russians were complying with their commitments, even as they would be assured that we were complying with ours.

Menshikov showed some impatience with this argument. He fell back upon the Communist line that inspection could follow disarmament, but that we were only interested in spying on the Russians. He brought up the U-2 incident as proof of this. I refused to be drawn into a discussion concerning the U-2, but I pointed out that, in the absence of any agreement between us suspending further nuclear tests and establishing effective controls over missiles and nuclear war-heads, we were compelled to take such measures as were available to us to ascertain where Russian missile bases were located in order that we might properly defend ourselves against a devastating missile attack. I reemphasized that the key to survival, as between our countries, was inspection.

To drive this point home, I pointed to the Geneva negotiations, where both countries were agreed as to the objective, i.e. the suspension of nuclear weapons tests, but where the Russians had refused to accept an inspection system that all of the competent scientific data showed to be necessary. I pointed out that both countries had come very close to an agreement at Geneva, but that the Russians had yet to accept the essentials of an inspection system that would adequately safeguard full compliance with the agreement.

Menshikov then became rather belligerent. He said regardless of whether or not Russia reached agreements with the United States, the Soviet Union would not tolerate further spying. He said, and I quote him exactly here, "One or two more U-2 flights will mean war between us."

I then accused Menshikov of avoiding the critical question, that is, inspection. I said we were willing to suspend further nuclear weapons tests (though Menshikov pointed to the Pentagon, to McCone, and to Teller as evidence that we were not), and that we were willing to enter into progressive disarmament agreements, providing that reasonable inspection was included.

He then asked me what effect the elections would have upon negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. I told him that I saw no difference between Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Nixon with respect to the firmness of either toward protecting American interests. I went on to say that regardless

of what agreement the President might reach with the Soviet Union, whoever the new President might be, that such agreement would have to be ratified by the United States Senate. I reminded him that Woodrow Wilson had personally participated in the drafting of the Treaty of Versailles, and that the League of Nations was Wilson's creation, and that he, the then President of the United States had returned to this country and pleaded with the Senate to ratify the Treaty and permit American participation in the League, and even carried the case directly to the people with such exertion that it brought on a collapse in his health, which lead to his untimely death, and yet the United States Senate had refused to ratify the Treaty. I said, "Mr. Ambassador, you must not confuse your legislative process with ours. It takes two-thirds of the Senators to ratify any treaty, and no President can force the Senate to ratify any treaty that more than a third of the Senators disapprove."

I thought that this statement, emphatic as I tried to make it, may have registered with Menshikov. Therefore, I followed it up with a reference to the recently ratified treaty on Antarctica. I took note of the fact that this treaty left all claims on Antarctica in abeyance, and that it left the entire subcontinent free for further scientific exploration, the results of which would be freely shared. I observed that no military base or nuclear weapons test could take place in Antarctica, under terms of the treaty, and that to assure full performance on the part of all parties, each signatory had the right of unrestricted inspection of the base or operation of any other signatory at any time. Yet, I pointed out, 21 Senators voted against the treaty, largely because they thought it suspect, owing to the fact that the Soviet Union had signed it. This, I insisted, ought to furnish plenty of evidence that the Senate would never ratify any other treaty affecting such matters as the cessation of nuclear weapons tests, the prevention of surprise attack, or arms control, unless the treaty contained fully adequate provisions concerning the right of inspection and enforcement.

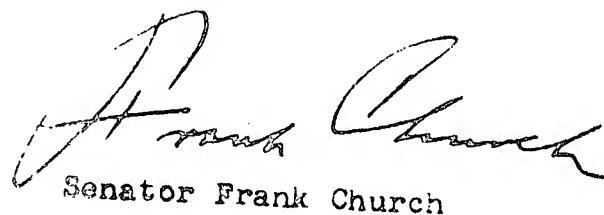
At this, Menshikov exploded. He said the Soviet Union did not have to take any further ultimatums from the United States. He ridiculed the Senate, saying that many of its members ought to be placed in cages and taken off to medical laboratories for research. He caught himself, quieted his wrath, and assured me that he meant no personal offense.

I, then, told him that I thought we should conclude our conversation, and that "ultimatum" as I understood it, was a demand upon one government to another to take certain action. I reminded him that I had made no demand that the Russian government come to any agreement with the United States,

But that if our common interest in certain fields made it advisable to reach agreement, then I thought he would want to inform his government accurately concerning the facts of political life in this country, and that critical among these facts was that the Senate of the United States, would, in my opinion, never ratify any agreement with the Soviet Union that did not contain adequate safeguards for inspection and enforcement.

Menchikov then reiterated that the time had passed when the Soviet Union had to come to any agreement with the United States. I said that I did not know whether there was a way to resolve the differences between us, but that I regarded the survival of our species on the planet as a fundamental interest we shared in common. I concluded, "the key to survival is inspection. I can see no sufficient reason why you should oppose it."

With that, our conversation ended, and I took my leave.



Frank Church
Senator Frank Church

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

Arch Calhoun called me and said that Secretary Herter had read the copy of the attached memo you left with Livvy Merchant with a great deal of interest, and had suggested that you might wish to consider sending a copy also to Andy Goodpaster.

JSE
2 Sept. 60
(DATE)

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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